

10/511,790

Response to Office Action mailed on November 30, 2007

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-25 (Cancelled)

26. (Previously Presented) A process for preparing an alginate gel or low-methoxy pectate gel comprising:

step 1) mixing water and a dispersion of alginate or low-methoxy pectate in an in-line dynamic mixer thereby producing an aqueous alginate sol or an aqueous low-methoxy pectate sol, then

step 2) generating free gelling ions in the aqueous alginate sol or the aqueous low-methoxy pectate sol in the in-line dynamic mixer either a) by including in the water or in the dispersion of alginate or low-methoxy pectate a salt providing gelling ions when dissolved which is insoluble at neutral pH but soluble at acid pHs and by feeding an acid to the sol as an aqueous solution or as a dispersion or b) by feeding a dispersion of a low-solubility salt providing gelling ions to the sol, and

step 3) allowing the aqueous alginate sol or the aqueous low-methoxy pectate sol to gel after the aqueous alginate sol or the aqueous low-methoxy pectate sol has left the in-line dynamic mixer.

27. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 26 in which the aqueous alginate sol or the aqueous low-methoxy pectate sol is allowed to gel quiescently immediately after the aqueous alginate sol or the aqueous low-methoxy pectate sol has

left the in-line dynamic mixer.

28. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 26 in which the free gelling ions are generated by feeding to the sol a dispersion of a low-solubility salt providing gelling ions.

29. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 26 in which a dispersant is used to prepare the dispersion of the alginate or low-methoxy pectate, of the acid or of the low-solubility salt, which dispersant is an anhydrous liquid dispersant which disperses or dissolves in water.

30. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 29 in which the dispersant is such that the alginate or low-methoxy pectate, the acid or the low-solubility salt can remain in suspension in the dispersant over periods of up to fifteen minutes without stirring.

31. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 30 in which the dispersant has lubricating properties.

32. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 31 in which the dispersant is an edible oil containing lecithin.

33. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 28 in which the low-solubility salt providing gelling ions has a solubility in the sol of less than 3.5%.

34. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 28 in which the low-solubility salt providing gelling ions has a solubility in the sol of less than 1%.

35. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 34 in which the salt has a solubility in the sol of less than 0.3% but above 0.02%.

36. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 35 in which the low-solubility salt providing gelling ions is a calcium salt.

37. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 36 in which the calcium salt is selected from the group consisting of calcium sulphate anhydrous, calcium sulphate dihydrate, calcium citrate, calcium tartrate and mixtures thereof.

38. (Previously Presented) A process for preparing an alginate gel or low-methoxy pectate gel according to claim 26 in which in step 1) meat or fruit in pumpable form is mixed with the aqueous alginate sol or the aqueous low-methoxy pectate sol in the in-line dynamic mixer.

39. (Previously Presented) A process for preparing an alginate gel or low-methoxy pectate gel according to claim 26 in which therapeutic amounts of biologically active substances are included in the in-line dynamic mixer.

40. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 39 in which anaerobic bacteria are the biologically active substances and the anaerobic bacteria are introduced into the in-line dynamic mixer by incorporation into the water in step 1).

41. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 39 in which the gel formed in step 3) is broken into portions on site.

42. (Previously Presented) A product of a process according to claim 26.

43. (Previously Presented) A process in which a product of a process according to claim 41 is fed to livestock.

44. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 43 in which the time between the end of step 2) and the product being fed to livestock is less than 30 minutes.

45. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 44 in which the livestock are chicks.

46. (Currently Amended) A feedstock for livestock which livestock require water but are sensitive to free water in the livestock's environment consisting of a product of a process of claim 41.

47. (Currently Amended) A feedstock for chicks consisting of a product of a process of claim 41.

48. (Previously Presented) A system comprising an in-line dynamic mixer with feed points through which a) a dispersion of alginate or low-methoxy pectate, b) water and c) a source of gelling ions can be separately fed to the mixer, feed points a) and b) being spaced sufficiently up-stream of feed point c) such that in use the alginate or low-methoxy pectate forms an aqueous alginate sol or a low-methoxy pectate sol before alginate or low-methoxy pectate comes into contact with the gelling ions, and a receptacle to receive the aqueous alginate sol or the low-methoxy pectate sol, the receptacle being such that the aqueous alginate sol or the low-methoxy pectate sol is maintained quiescently to produce an alginate gel or low-methoxy pectate gel.

49. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 48 further comprising on site means to break the alginate gel or low-methoxy pectate gel into feedstock size portions.